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**CONTINUING
A 4-ISSUE
PICTORIAL
HISTORY OF
THE WORLD'S
GREATEST
NON-MUTANT
SUPER-HERO!**



OWN A PIECE OF THE MARVEL LEGEND



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83-100
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Stan Lee Presents:

SPIDER-MAN[®]

SAGA

Volume 2

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INTRODUCTION

"S'funny . . . in pop fiction, the masked hero's always looking for a gimmick that'll strike terror into the hearts of evil-doers. The Shadow . . . Batman . . . there was even a guy called the Spider. once.

"Well, cheer up, web-spinner. You got 'em all beat."

— Peter Parker, *Amazing Spider-Man* #101



Last issue in THE SPIDER-MAN SAGA we examined how Peter Parker was bitten by a radioactive spider and gained the proportionate strength and agility of the arachnid. Originally using his powers for selfish gain, Peter's life was shattered when he discovered his Uncle Ben had been murdered by a criminal he refused to apprehend earlier.

So it was that Spider-Man, the reluctant super hero, was born. Armed with web-shooters, he struggled with sinister super-villains while trying to make ends meet and maintain some semblance of a normal life as Peter Parker.

But upon entering college and falling in love with a coed named Gwen Stacy, Peter became disenchanted with his double life. Deciding to forego his role as a super hero, Peter devised a serum to rid himself of his powers. But the concoction backfired and the young student awoke the following morning to discover the serum had synthesized with his already mutated physiology, making him more spidery than ever — by granting him four extra arms!



Realizing that he had to discover a means to reverse the effects of the serum, Spider-Man sought the aid of his friend, Dr. Curt Connors. Connors secluded the web-spinner in his Southampton vacation house, complete with its fully-equipped basement lab. Spider-Man worked frantically to find a cure, but to no avail. That's when a being called Morbius washed ashore.

Dr. Michael Morbius was a Nobel Prize winning biochemist who discovered that he was dying from a rare blood disease. Morbius attempted to cure his condition with fluids distilled from the bodies of vampire bats. Failing that, he subjected himself to an electrical shock treatment intended to stimulate the creation of more blood cells in his system.

However, the shock treatment only succeeded in reacting with the chemicals from the bats in Morbius's bloodstream, causing a drastic transformation to overcome the scientist. Now dependent on human blood for survival, Morbius had become, in effect, a living vampire!



Morbius decided that Spider-Man's blood would make a tasty dessert, having just killed a shipload of people for his main course. Weakened due to lack of sleep, the wall-crawler was no match for Morbius's superhuman strength. Just as the living vampire was about to sink his teeth into Spidey's jugular, Connors returned to the vacation house. Morbius attacked the research biologist, and the shock was severe enough to cause Connors to revert once more into his villainous alter ego . . . the Lizard.

Morbius escaped, but not before biting the Lizard. This bite had the effect of transforming the Lizard into a synthesis of his two selves. Since the enzyme in Morbius's blood helped the Lizard, Spider-Man concluded that it could help his condition as well. After a hectic pursuit, Spider-Man and the Connors/Lizard captured Morbius and extracted a blood sample from him. Spidey was cured, his four extra arms disappeared, and he assumed Morbius had drowned.

Shortly thereafter, however, the injection of Morbius's blood began to interact with Spidey's own. Experiencing dizziness and nausea, he learned that it was killing him. The web-slinger joined forces with the Human Torch to battle Morbius, who had been feeding in the vicinity of Empire State University. Morbius escaped Spidey and the Torch, and Spider-Man felt weaker and sicker than ever.

Thinking Morbius might try to contact his former colleague, Professor Hans Jorgenson, Spider-Man traveled to State University, Queens, where Peter Parker attended his biology class. However, upon entering the professor's office, the wall-crawler found the place in disarray, and assumed Morbius had kidnapped him.

Par for the course, the *Daily Bugle* blamed Spider-Man for the crime in an article read by Charles Xavier, founder of the X-Men. Xavier then assigned the team of young mutants to capture Spider-Man in order to question him about the disappearance of his old colleague.



The team soon completed its mission and subdued the weakened web-slinger. Probing his unconscious mind, Professor X determined the truth of the situation and dispatched his X-Men to capture Morbius. They defeated the vampire and retrieved Jorgenson, who cured the grateful Spider-Man with an antitoxin from Morbius's blood.

No sooner was Spidey back to normal when J. Jonah Jameson, publisher of the *Daily Bugle*, assigned Peter Parker to accompany him to Antarctica to photograph the mysterious Savage Land. Peter agreed, as long as he could take his girlfriend, Gwen, along.

Once in the Savage Land, Gwen was kidnapped by Kraven the Hunter and a giant alien named Gog. Kraven was trying to carve out a kingdom among the Swamp Men of the Savage Land, and he wanted Gwen as his queen. Spidey teamed up with Ka-Zar and managed to rescue Gwen and defeat the pair.



Back in New York, Professor Spencer Smythe set his latest and most formidable Spider-Slayer robot, shaped like a giant spider, against Spider-Man. Worse yet was Spidey's discovery that Smythe had placed video cameras on rooftops all over Manhattan and had seen Spider-Man's unmasked face! Fortunately, he was able to trick Smythe into thinking that his Peter Parker face was just a latex disguise before defeating the robot and turning him over to the police.

Peter Parker returned to State University, this time at the Southampton college, to assist Dr. Henry Pym's narcotics research, at Curt Connors' recommendation. However, Connors' son, Billy, was kidnapped by a band of rogues who planned to sell the experimental narcotics in the underworld. Peter met the kidnappers in his civilian identity while Pym became Ant-Man to rescue Billy. Finally, Peter donned his Spider-Man garb and captured the kidnappers.



Meanwhile, Flash Thompson returned from his military assignment in southeast Asia. While stationed there, he had spent time recuperating from injuries in the care of the Monks of the Hidden Temple. When he returned to his base, he learned the troops were about to start shelling the sector. Thinking him delirious, his superiors did not heed Flash's protest. Surviving worshippers believed that Flash had been a spy who had set up their temple as a deliberate shelling target.

When his tour of duty had ended, a death-squad of native fanatics had placed a price on Flash's head when he returned Stateside. Spidey cleared Flash's name with the help of his old friend, Dr. Strange, and Flash was reunited with Sha Shan, the Vietnamese woman he had fallen in love with in the Hidden Temple.

As for Spidey, however, such happiness still eluded him. He soon found himself battling a ridiculous would-be hero/partner turned villain by Kraven the Hunter. Although he defeated the Gibbon relatively easily, he had much greater difficulty when he found himself caught in the middle of the greatest gang war since the Kingpin-Schemer showdown some time earlier.

Things kept going from bad to worse for Spider-man during the gang war. Doctor Octopus returned with a vengeance and managed to rip the web-head's mask off during their first encounter. Although he escaped with his secret identity intact, Spidey was forced to obtain a cheap cellophane



Hammerhead was a 1930's-style gangster with an impenetrable plate of adamantium lacing his skull. In the ensuing melee, Hammerhead managed to graze Spider-Man in the temple with a bullet, adding a near-concussion to the web-spinner's long list of afflictions.



To top it all off, when Spider-Man invaded Doc Ock's Westchester headquarters, he was knocked unconscious because his vaunted spider-sense failed to warn him.

Why . . . ?



Upon regaining consciousness, Spider-Man battled Doctor Octopus before a petrified Aunt May. Spider-Man's rage boiled when Octavius stated that he loved her, and the wall-crawler pummeled the villain into senselessness. When his rage passed, he found himself staring down the barrel of a pistol grasped by . . .



Fortunately, police sirens distracted Aunt May and she missed.

Hammerhead escaped the wall-crawler's justice by butting him in his ulcer-ridden stomach with his adamantium head. Although he captured Octopus, he didn't feel too triumphant. After all, Doc Ock had asked his Aunt May, who still considered him a wonderful man, to stay on at the house as caretaker, and she accepted.

Meanwhile, the Amazing Spider-Man joined forces with the Thing to fight the Puppet Master and the Mad Thinker, Thor to battle a troll called Krylik the Cruel, and Greer Nelson in her one-time identity as the Cat to face the maniacal Man-Killer.

Shortly thereafter, Spider-Man found himself thrust into the heart of a conflict called the "Tomorrow War." Rushing to Iron Man's aid at Avengers Mansion, Spidey and the golden Avenger were transported to Limbo. There they met Thor's old twentieth-century adversary, Zarrko, the Tomorrow Man. Zarrko duped the heroic pair into breaching the temporal fortress owned by Kang the Conqueror, who had kidnapped some of the other Avengers. Thanks to their unwitting assistance, Zarrko now possessed Kang's power, and he was going to use it to attack the twentieth century.



Zarrko sent three capsules to the twentieth century which would emit a choral radiation upon striking, reversing the progress of time and effectively hurling the twentieth century back to the Stone Age. Spider-Man escaped the temporal fortress through a Time Portal which delivered him back to the twentieth century. There he sought the aid of the Fantastic Four, but only the Human Torch was available. The Torch destroyed the first bomb in Japan before its full effects became irreversible. Likewise, Spider-Man witnessed the first effects of the time bomb in Venezuela and Greece before he and the Torch defused them.

Spider-Man then sought out the Inhumans to help him harness the energy of one of the time bombs he defused to propel him into the future. Bringing the Inhumans with him, Spider-Man put an end to the battle between the two time masters, and things returned to normal.

Of course, normal for everyone's favorite wall-crawler was a photo assignment of the Hulk's rampage in Canada. Their resultant battle along the St. Lawrence Seaway caused the subsequent destruction of the Maskattawan Dam and the Expo '67 fairgrounds.





Back in New York, tragedy lurked around the corner. While Mary Jane was still angling for Peter's attention, she had been dating Peter Parker's best friend, Harry. Ultimately, though, it was neither Mary Jane nor Harry who destroyed Peter and Gwen Stacy's happiness. Harry's troubled personal life induced his return to his LSD habit. Harry's father, Norman, was also having serious financial trouble. Torn between blaming himself for his son's condition and blaming Harry's friends, the mentally unstable Osborn snapped — and he resumed his career as the costumed villain, the Green Goblin.



The Goblin knew Spider-Man's secret identity, so he kidnapped Peter's girlfriend, Gwen, and brought her to the top of the Brooklyn Bridge. When the webbed hero arrived, the Goblin knocked her off the bridge...



Spider-Man caught Gwen with his webbing — but it was too late...



Overwhelmed by shock and grief, Spider-Man vowed to kill the Green Goblin — and he almost did! But at the crucial moment, Spider realized he couldn't take the life of another human being. Before he could take the Goblin to jail, however, the villain mentally commanded his battered glider to impale the web-slinger. But . . .



Unbeknownst to Spider-Man, however, his roommate, Harry Osborn, the son of the Green Goblin, witnessed the entire transaction — and removed the Goblin costume from his father's body so that the police would discover no evidence linking the dead Osborn to the costumed criminal. This event made Harry more unstable than ever.



Although it was a time of endings, it was also a time of new beginnings. When the grief-stricken Peter Parker returned home he found . . .



However, Spider-Man didn't have much time for mourning when J. Jonah Jameson commissioned Luke Cage, Hero for Hire, to bring Spider-Man in for the murder of Norman Osborn. After a brief brawl on the campus of Empire State University, the two heroes behaved in an unusually civil manner — they discussed the matter and reached a mutual agreement.

Irate that his plans had been thwarted, Jonah Jameson was not blinded so much by his rage that he failed to see that Peter needed something to take his mind off the tragedy of Gwen's death. He therefore sent him to San Francisco to take photos of Daredevil and the Black Widow, who had been adventuring there. In addition to helping the crime-fighting couple engage the wretched Ramrod, Spider-Man encountered the Werewolf Jack Russell and the mystic, Moondark. Moondark was a third-rate performing magician with a talent for enchantment. But the dark beings he worshipped boosted his abilities to the point where he could hypnotize whole neighborhoods, until his was stopped by the Werewolf and the web-head.



Returning to New York City, the woebegone wall-crawler's weird welterings with wicked werewolves worsened wretchedly. Jonah Jameson's astronaut son, John, had earlier been selected for a secret mission to the moon . . . He wore the pendant around his throat on the first night of a full moon. The lunar luminescence reacted with it, causing him to transform into the menacing Man-Wolf!



Warren believed the news media's contentions that Spider-Man was responsible for her demise. He surreptitiously used cell samples that had been taken from Gwen and Peter to create a genetic virus. This virus transformed the hosts on a cellular level into near duplicates of the donor.



Unable to accept the fact that he himself had committed these heinous acts, the psychologically unbalanced Warren convinced himself that someone else had performed them.



A month later, Warren's assistant, Anthony Serba, discovered the virus. Enraged, the professor injected Serba with the virus obtained from Peter Parker's DNA. Three days later, Warren kidnapped a young pupil named Joyce Delany and injected her with the genetic virus obtained from Gwen.



Warren trained himself athletically and designed a Jackal costume and special weaponry.



The Jackal first attempted to destroy Spider-Man by inducing an armed vigilante called the Punisher to kill the wall-crawler to avenge the deaths of Gwen and Norman Osborn. The Punisher was a man named Frank Castle who had once been a captain in the United States Marine Corps. While on leave, he took his family to Central Park for a picnic. There they witnessed a mob killing. Fearing witnesses, the mobsters murdered Castle's family. Although he survived, he was traumatized. Dropping out of sight for several months, he resurfaced to wage a one-man war on crime.



The Punisher believed that the Jackal was also dedicated to destroying the criminal underworld. After a fierce battle, Spider-Man convinced the Punisher of his innocence. The Punisher also learned that the Jackal had killed the vigilante's friend and gun-maker, a mechanic named Reiss.

At this time, the Jackal was also fantasizing about taking over Manhattan, and attempted to set Spider-Man, Doctor Octopus and Hammerhead against one another, in the hopes that the three of them would destroy each other.

Meanwhile, on December 20, Johnny Storm, a.k.a. the high-flying Human Torch, gave the web-spinner an early Christmas gift.

Unfortunately, Spider-Man never learned how to drive a car properly! But that didn't stop him from using it against Hammerhead's gang. During that encounter, Spidey discovered that Doctor Octopus planned to marry Aunt May in order to gain control of an atomic power plant she had inherited on a remote Canadian island. Fortunately, the timely interruption of Hammerhead prevented the web-head from the embarrassment of ever having to say "uncle" in front of his archfoe. The metal-headed gangster unwittingly triggered a chain reaction within the atomic breeder reactor, apparently killing the feuding offenders.

While Peter was busy nixing the nuptials between his aunt and his enemy, Mary Jane expressed her own care-free attitude to Betty Brant and Ned Leeds about her relationship with Peter at Betty's Christmas party . . .



YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT PETER, RIGHT? WHETHER I LOVE HIM, AND ALL THAT?

THIS IS GOING TO SOUND LIKE A CROP-OUT... BUT I DON'T WANT TO LOVE HIM. CAN YOU DIG IT?

I LIKE THE GUY TOO MUCH FOR THAT KIND OF SCENE.



Meanwhile, Dr. Curt Connors and his assistant, Dr. Vincent Stegron, were experimenting with cell regeneration using dinosaur tissue Ka-Zar had supplied to SHIELD (then, the Supreme Headquarters International Espionage Law-enforcement Division). However, Stegron stole the extract and headed to the Savage Land with it. Connors contacted Spider-Man and asked him to go after Stegron. With the aid of Ka-Zar, Spidey discovered that Stegron had ingested the extract, successfully transforming him into a Dinosaur Man! Spider-Man managed to subdue Stegron in New York, with the aid of the Black Panther.

Walking home to his apartment, Peter Parker bumped into his old high school classmate, Liz Allan. Liz explained that upon graduating Midtown High, she had taken a job as a nurse at Newhope Memorial Hospital to be near her step-brother, Mark Raxton, who had earlier been transformed into the monstrous Molten Man. Raxton's metal skin had begun to react with his metabolism. While his body temperature had risen to 300°, his skin was in danger of melting. Raxton discovered that he was suffering from radiation poisoning.



Enraged, the Molten Man attacked Liz and escaped from the hospital so that he could use his scientific know-how to cure himself. To do so, he stole some meteor fragments from a museum which contained the same radioactive isotopes as the original meteor which had altered him. But Spider-Man foiled this ploy and the Molten Man ended up in the East River.

While trying to obtain a story on this subject, Ned Leeds was exposed to the meteor fragments and contracted radiation sickness. This even may have contributed to Ned's mental state in affairs yet to come!

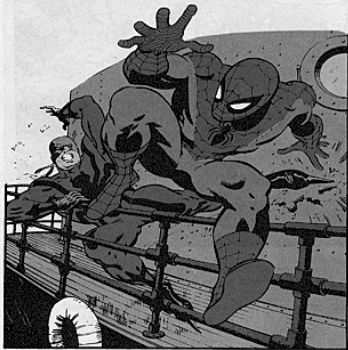
Elsewhere, Morbius the Living Vampire decided that he needed help to gain access to an experimental blood transfusion machine that may have been able to cure his own bizarre condition. So he exposed John Jameson once again to the same gemstone the young astronaut had brought back from the moon. Jameson reverted to his Man-Wolf persona, and Morbius intended to use him as a pawn in his scheme. Spider-Man drove off the monstrous pair, but his conflicts with vampires were far from over.

After a brief union with the ace archer, Hawkeye, against the hideous automaton called Quasimodo, Spider-Man faced a creature more supernatural in origin — namely a Transylvanian count called Dracula!

Aunt May had once again fallen seriously ill, and Spider-Man borrowed a plane from the Fantastic Four to fly out to a cruise ship where Dr. A.J. Maxwell carried her new flu vaccine. But the web-spinner didn't realize that other parties were interested in the vaccine. Some gangsters wanted to hold it



for ransom, and Dracula wanted to destroy the serum, fearing that it would interfere with his own plans. Spidey beat the gangsters (with some unwitting help from the Lord of Vampires) and brought the doctor and the vaccine back to New York and a grateful Aunt May. Surprisingly, other than a casual bump on the deck of the ship, Spider-Man and Dracula never met.



Since his experience on the cruise boat was anything but relaxing, Peter Parker decided to take a pleasure cruise down the Hudson with Mary Jane Watson, Liz Allan, and Flash Thompson. Little did he realize that the tortilla-chomping Tarantula had arrived in New York and hijacked the Hudson River Dayliner in order to rob the passengers and hold them for ransom. Peter changed into Spider-Man and, accompanied by the Punisher, disrupted the Tarantula's plan.

As Spider-Man and the Punisher discovered the origin of the Tarantula, Peter's roommate, Harry Osborn, had made a discovery of his own . . .

Meanwhile, in New Orleans, an unassuming accountant named Wally Bevins was possessed by a loa (Voodoo God) named Moondog the Malicious. Escaping from the justice of the houngan priest, Brother Voodoo, Moondog made his way to New York. Overnight, he became the high priest of a weird cult — until he finally found salvation in the form of Brother Voodoo and Spider-Man!





Another antagonist stepped from the pages of legend to plague the wondrous wall-crawler's world. Dr. Fu Manchu duped Spider-Man into a pitched battle with his son and sworn enemy: Shang Chi, Master of Kung Fu! Within the generator room of an electrical plant near the 59th Street Bridge, the two heroes pitted their respective skills against each other until they realized that they had been tricked. Combining their efforts, they managed to put an end to Fu Manchu's evil plans atop the Empire State Building.

But Spider-Man had no time for new enemies. His oldest foe, the Chameleon, disguised himself as the web-slinger and attempted to break his friend, Joe Cord, out of prison. The plan failed because the master of disguises forgot that Spider-Man was wanted by the police. Meanwhile, the real Spidey investigated the matter. But to his surprise, the Chameleon had enlisted the aid of the Hulk by disguising himself as the green-skinned goliath's erstwhile companion, Rick Jones. The determined web-spinner had little effect on stopping the Hulk from delivering Cord to the Chameleon. However, Cord was killed when he deliberately took a bullet aimed at the Chameleon by a policeman, saying he did it out of friendship. On a happier note, Spider-Man's name was cleared — of that particular crime.



Back at Peter Parker's apartment, someone was consumed with an insane desire for revenge against the wall-crawler because he believed Spider-Man was guilty of another crime — murdering his father!



Harry Osborn had rigged the door of his and Peter's apartment with a detonating fuse. When Peter and Mary Jane (who had recently broken up with Harry) returned home from a date, a simple turn of the key led to disastrous results. Fortunately, Peter's spider-sense provided a sufficient warning to hurl himself and MJ from harm's way. The apartment, on the other hand, was demolished.

The Mindworm, as he was dubbed, had been feeding off the emotions of those around him, placing him in mental trances, drawing them to him night after night, because he hated being alone. But Spider-Man's emotions were so overbearing that Turner felt compelled to destroy the web-slinger. But Spider-Man struck first and shattered the Mindworm's mental link to the residents of Far Rockaway. Unable to draw upon their thoughts for sustenance, Turner began to starve. He was rushed to a hospital where surgeons prevented his untimely death.

And for those of you who believe that Hercules could never spin a yarn as big as Spider-Man's.



By the end of that summer, Liz Allan contacted Peter about an affordable apartment for him on Chelsea Street. Peter signed the lease, despite the cranky mannerisms of the landlady, Mrs. Muggins. Of course, the neighbors weren't all unfriendly . . .



While Peter was trying to get his personal life together, the Jackal was still conniving his sinister machinations. "Crazy Max" Markham had been a professional wrestler until a Daily Bugle anti-violence campaign ended his career. The Jackal equipped him with a powered exoskeleton buried beneath a bear suit and called him the Grizzly. The dastardly duo captured Peter Parker, and the Jackal affixed a homing device to his arm, claiming that he wanted Peter to lead him to Spider-Man. Peter succeeded in freeing himself of the device safely, and neither the Grizzly's name nor costume failed to leave a lasting impression on the web-spinner.

Speaking of lasting impressions, Spider-Man was called upon to right a wrong committed in 1934 by the bronze-skinned crimefighter called Doc Savage. A female alien named DeSinna had duped Savage into imprisoning her enemy, a cloven-hoofed wraith named Tarros, within the cornerstone of a building. With the building scheduled for demolition, she now tried to dupe Spidey into helping her as well. The webbed hero, however, understood, as the chivalrous Doc Savage had not, that women were just as capable of committing wrongs as men. He released Tarros, to DeSinna's eternal dismay.



Back home, Peter Parker's new neighbor, Gloria Grant, was attacked by her own cousin, Ramon, who had been drugged by a deranged bigot named Malcolm Merriwell. As Midas the Golden Man, Merriwell ran a drug trade, until Spider-Man and the Falcon brought his operation to a sudden halt and sent the "philanthropist" to jail.



With Midas behind bars, Spider-Man decided to spend time tracking down the more serious threat of the Jackal. Bringing the Spider-Mobile out of storage to aid him, Spidey's lack of driving skill hindered him during a police chase, and he drove the vehicle into what appeared to be an alley, but was actually a pier leading into the Hudson River. A very wet, very angry Spider-Man soon pulled himself onto the pier, puzzled about how he could have mistaken it for an alley. He would soon find out.



While Quentin Beck had been serving his prison sentence, he revealed many of his secrets to his fellow inmate, a stuntman named Danny Berkhart, who had previously worked with the special effects master. Berkhart appropriated Beck's devices and, following the footsteps of the Vulture and the Green Goblin, became the new Mysterio! Berkhart attempted to claim vengeance on Spider-Man in a gesture of gratitude to Beck, as well as under contract for J. Jonah Jameson, but he failed miserably. Fearing that Berkhart would reveal his involvement to the authorities, Jameson caught the first plane to Paris.

Through some strange anomaly of time and space, a man called Drom was transformed into a being who absorbed choral energy from the life forces of living beings in order to survive. Due to a freak of time, Drom's infant form had been exchanged through time with his aged body just minutes after birth. The result was that Drom actually lived his life in reverse! But when he tried to drain Spider-Man and the martial artist Iron Fist of their choral energies, the costumed crimefighters destroyed Drom's tenuous grip on time, regressing him to pre-infancy).



No sooner did Spidey part company with Iron Fist than another erstwhile partner burst back into the web-slinger's life. The gangland executioner called the Punisher had discovered that the malevolent Moses Magnum had been marketing an experimental biochemical nerve gas. Moses Magnum was an Ethiopian weapons manufacturer for the Deterrence Research Corporation. At an early age he became fascinated with weapons and joined forces with a rebel guerrilla outfit against his own people in the Eritrean Civil War.

Magnum had been testing the effectiveness of the toxic gas on subjects kidnapped from around the world. Spider-Man witnessed the effects of the gas on a video tape appropriated by the Punisher. The gas actually disintegrated people, melting the flesh from the victims' still living bodies. Horrified, Spider-Man agreed to join the Punisher in his assault on Magnum's South American death-camp.



In a brilliantly conceived plan, the wall-crawler and the knave-waster rescued the kidnap victims. Infuriated, Magnum threatened to drop a canister of toxic gas on Spider-Man. Knowing the flesh-dissolving effect of the gas, the Punisher pronounced Magnum certainly dead. But, Moses Magnum retreated to Japan, where he assumed the guise of Magnum Force. There he became a powerful pawn of They Who Wield Power and the mutant determinist, Apocalypse, against Power Man and the X-Men.

Attempting to sell photographs of the Magnum affair to the Daily Bugle, Peter Parker was surprised to discover that Jonah Jameson had left for Europe some time before. Jameson had left Joe "Robbie" Robertson, the Bugle's city editor, in charge. Because of Robbie's close association with the deceased Captain George Stacy (who had known that Peter was Spider-Man,) the young photographer was always suspicious as to how much Robbie might have known. Peter's suspicions escalated when Robbie revealed that Jameson had asked Robbie to join the publisher in Paris and to bring with him \$1 million in negotiable bonds. Robbie asked Peter to accompany him.

Mary Jane accompanied Peter to the airport, where she finally succumbed to the Parker charm — Mary Jane realized that their relationship was becoming serious and was astonished at the depth of her own feelings for Peter.

Meanwhile, in France, a former NATO engineer, whose cyclone wind generating device was rejected by his superiors as impractical for a war-weapon, had kidnapped Jameson because of his association with a major American newspaper. Designing for himself the costumed identity of the Cyclone, he also captured Joe Robertson shortly after the city editor arrived in Paris. Donning his Spider-Man attire, Peter took the wind out of the Cyclone's sails, thereby rescuing both his captives, much to Jameson's chagrin.

Upon returning home, Peter learned that his Aunt May had once again been hospitalized due to an enigma that was waiting for Peter in his apartment . . .

The sight threw poor Peter into shock. As Spider-Man, he tried to figure all this out while contending with the return of the Looter, whose name-change to Meteor Man did nothing to help his criminal endeavors against the likes of Spidey, Nighthawk, and the Valkyrie.



Without so much as a breather after his encounter with the Meteor Man, Spider-Man clashed with the Scorpion, who had just been paroled. While visiting his aunt at the hospital, reporter Ned Leeds revealed the incredible truth about Gwen Stacy. Under the Jackal's direction the Scorpion attacked May Parker in her hospital room. Peter ducked away and once again assumed his masked identity. Enraged by the assault on his aunt, the return of Gwen Stacy, and the fact that the Jackal had known where to send the Scorpion to find Spider-Man, the webbed wonder made easy pickings out of the villain. He then forced the Scorpion to apologize to Aunt May.



Trying to escape his problems, at least temporarily, Peter decided to take a much-needed vacation. He had the Bugle finance it by sending him to Florida to take exclusive photos of the Everglades monster called the Man-Thing. Saying goodbye to Gwen, Peter embarked on his trip to Florida, where he would be meeting Doctor Curtis Connors. But Connors clumsily knocked over a beaker containing the serum which transformed him into the Lizard. Most of Connors' memories receded, except those of the Man-Thing, which had been the topic of his discussion with Peter Parker.



Things were heating up on all fronts regarding the Gwen Stacy "clone." Mary Jane thought she might lose Peter to Gwen. Once again, it was Aunt May, the original matchmaker, who kept the couple on a steady course.



Peter went into action as Spider-Man when he learned of the dire situation from Dr. Connors' wife, Martha. But this time the Lizard had an ace up his sleeve — he was able to mentally command the Man-Thing as well as all the reptiles in the vicinity to attack the web-slinger. But the Lizard's plan backfired.



Not only did the Man-Thing turn against him, but a former chemist who had been following the muck-monster devised an antidote to the Lizard serum. Thus, the incident concluded optimistically, and Spider-Man returned home.

But soon he would wish he hadn't.



Meanwhile, the Jackal and his new ally, the Tarantula, captured Spider-Man and brought him and Gwen (who was now in a hypnotic trance induced by the Jackal) atop the Brooklyn Bridge, from which the original Gwen had fallen to her death.



Spider-Man saved himself with his webbing, but shortly thereafter, he tackled the Tarantula again. Although he defeated his poison-toed opponent, the web-slinger was challenged by the Jackal, who revealed his true identity to him.

Before leaving to battle Spider-Man, Professor Warren devised a genetic virus based on his own DNA.



The Jackal lured Spider-Man to Shea Stadium. There he forced the wall-crawler to battle the Spider-Man "clone" he had created from the genetic virus with which he had infected Anthony Serba. Warren dressed the Spider-Clone in the spare Spider-Man costume Peter had discarded to avoid detection when his apartment had been bombed.

Meanwhile, the Jackal held Peter's friend Ned Leeds captive at the stadium and had set a bomb to kill the reporter. Witnessing the battle, Gwen broke free of Warren's control. Bitterly, she confronted the Jackal with his real identity and the fact that he was a murderer. Shocked by the realization that it was he, Miles Warren, who had effectively murdered Anthony Serba and was about to kill Ned Leeds, Warren released the reporter. The bomb then detonated, killing both Warren and the Spider-Man "clone," which was ironically Serba all along. Ned, Gwen, and Spider-Man all survived, although Peter was unsure whether he was the original or the clone...



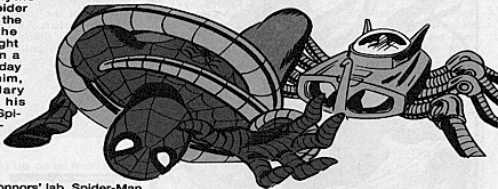


Later, at the grave of the original Gwen Stacy, the Gwen "clone" bid farewell to Peter because she couldn't remain in a town that thought her dead.



Returning to his Chelsea apartment, Peter experienced a sense of *deja vu*...

And so, Peter spent that night and the following day proving to himself that he was the genuine article. Enlisting the aid of Dr. Curt Connors, he ran through a series of tests which the biologist affirmed would determine his true origin. But the real test came when Spencer Smythe returned with his Spider-Slayer robot and had the web-slinger on the ropes, until he thought about Mary Jane. In a feat that would one day become habit for him, his feelings for Mary Jane increased his adrenalin flow, and Spider-Man quickly disposed of Smythe and his robot.



Returning to Dr. Connors' lab, Spider-Man snagged the folder containing his test results. Confident that he no longer needed the report to determine who he was, the hero scattered it into the night wind.

But before the webbed wonder could dispose of his "clone's" body, a deranged Balkan scientist snatched Spider-Man's own body. Baron Ludwig Von Shtupf intended to combine Spidey's body with the Frankenstein Monster's into a single "monster supreme." Along with a beautiful SHIELD agent, the Monster and Spider-Man stormed the baron's Balkan castle, only to discover that the Monster-Maker had kidnapped the Man-Wolf as well and had made the beast his unwitting pawn.



But the Frankenstein Monster and the webbed wonder foiled Von Shtupf's sinister scheme, and he and the Man-Wolf were taken into custody by SHIELD. SHIELD physicians examined John Jameson thoroughly and discovered that the gemstone was transforming into a malignant organism, sinking beneath his skin and poisoning him. J. Jonah Jameson authorized to have his son placed in suspended animation at the Manhattan Cryonics Laboratory in hopes of arresting the process.

Meanwhile, Spidey's beastly battles were just beginning. Johnny Horton was a small time criminal who was captured by agents of the Secret Empire, a subversive organization that had been kidnapping various superhuman mutants in order to use their life-energy to power the Empire's large "flying saucer" craft. At their research facilities within the Brand Corporation, the Secret Empire transformed Horton into a superhuman creature which resembled the mythological griffin. But Hank McCoy, the mutant also known as the Beast, had also been employed at the Brand Corporation, and he defeated the Griffin.



While the Griffin was in prison, his body mutated further, giving him a tail and increasing his strength. The Griffin broke out of prison and hunted down the surgeon who had transformed him. Hurling him from a great height in rage, Spider-Man caught the surgeon, but the two men struck a tanker when Spidey's webbing snapped. The Beast, who had learned of the Griffin's escape, helped the web-spinner and the surgeon to safety. But, although Spider-Man took the brunt of the impact against the tanker, the surgeon died. Together, the web-head and the Beast defeated the Griffin, who was again taken into police custody.

Imagining the enormous problems that would be created if the world discovered two Peter Parkers, one of which was dead, Spider-Man consigned his clone "brother" to the flames of an incinerating plant in Brooklyn. He ignored his spider-sense when it tried to warn him that Harry Osborn had photographed the entire incident, under the hypnotic control of his therapist, Dr. Bart Hamilton.



Harry had been released from the psychiatric institution earlier that day, and he had moved in with Flash Thompson. But his welcome home party was cut short by the Shocker's new scheme to extort \$1 million from New York City. Severing selected power cables beneath the streets, he blacked out specific city blocks to spell his pseudonym. He then threatened to black out the entire metropolitan area if he was not paid the specified amount. When the mayor refused, he attacked the Queens Power Station, where he was rocked into unconsciousness when Spider-Man locked his vibro-shockers in the "on" position.



Peter Parker began the summer vacation before his senior year with a trip to Cleveland, where J. Jonah Jameson sent him on a *Daily Bugle* assignment to obtain photos of a "duck that talks like a man." Although Peter was skeptical when he embarked on the trip, he soon converted to a true believer.

Later that summer, Nicholas Lewis Jr. and Janice Foswell returned to America upon graduating from a private university in Europe. Both had reasons to hate Spider-Man: Lewis's father had been the Crime-Master and Janice's father had been Frederick Foswell, the Big Man. They blamed the wall-crawler for the deaths of their fathers, and each assumed the respective criminal guise of their departed sires, without the other's knowledge.

The second Big Man hired Fancy Dan and Montana of the original Enforcers to capture the Human Torch. Using the Torch to lure his web-slinging partner into their trap, the plan almost succeeded if not for the timely intercession of the Sons of the Tiger. However, the second Crime-Master had a powerhouse of his own in the form of the Sandman. In the ensuing melee, the Crime Master shot and killed the Big Man, never realizing her true identity until Spider-Man revealed it to him upon his capture. Shakespeare would have cried.

The Sandman escaped from the authorities, with the help of the Kingpin of crime. The Kingpin required the Sandman to steal an experimental cryogenic converter, which he needed to place his son, Richard, into suspended animation due to mortal wounds he had received as Supreme Hydra. The Sandman attempted to use the converter as a weapon against the web-slinger, but his plan backfired, and he managed to quick-freeze himself into a brittle, crystalline mass.

Finally, the big day arrived for Ned Leeds and Betty Brant. After their lengthy engagement, the wedding ceremony was held at Morgan's of Malverne. Peter Parker was to be the best man and Mary Jane Watson the maid of honor, but Peter's thoughts turned to his future with MJ. The ceremony started...



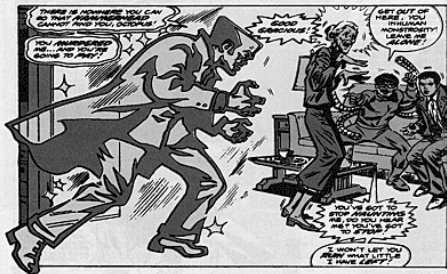
But it was rudely interrupted by the costumed holograph-master, the Mirage. After changing into his costumed identity, Spider-Man defeated the Mirage's accomplices, but he found himself unable to strike the Mirage. The Mirage used his holographs to make himself appear to be in different places than he actually was.

Realizing he was being deceived through illusions, the web-slinger caused an enormous chandelier to fall from the ceiling, which struck down the true Mirage. The Mirage and his men were taken into custody by the police, but the *War of the Roses* omen did not bode well for the Leeds's marriage.

Speaking of omens, May Parker caught the bouquet before Betty and Ned left for their Parisian honeymoon, reminding her of when she almost married Doctor Octopus. And waiting for her when she returned home...



Octopus had not been killed in the nuclear accident triggered by Hammerhead months before. He had returned to America, but the combination of the shock of his experience and his fear of repeatedly seeing the ghost of Hammerhead caused him to lead the life of a derelict for months.



Hammerhead's head had been caught in the reactor as Octopus had fled to safety through a nearby shaft. The gangster had freed his head only moments before the reactor exploded. Strangely enough, however, Hammerhead was not killed either. Rather, he was projected out of sync with this dimension and could appear in it only as an immaterial ghost-like being.

Kidnapping Aunt May, Doctor Octopus retreated to the Brookhaven Laboratories in Long Island, hoping to use the particle accelerator there to dispose of Hammerhead. As the gangster had hoped, however, the accelerator actually restored Hammerhead to a normal existence in this dimension.

Hammerhead battled Octopus and Spider-Man at the laboratory, then escaped, taking Aunt May as his own hostage. The wall-crawling hero and the mechanical-armed maniac pursued the hard-headed mobster to his former nightclub headquarters and rescued May Parker, but Hammerhead attempted to escape in a helicopter. Doc Ock hurled trash cans at the helicopter's blades, causing the chopper to plummet into the Hudson River, where it exploded. Octopus then made his escape.

The Human Fly killed Stillwell, then kidnapped Jameson to lure Spider-Man into his clinging clutches. Although the buzzing bad guy had similar strength, speed, and powers to the web-spinner, the Fly fell before Spider-Man, who crippled the villain's main weapon when he webbed his wings.

Trying to escape his troubles, Peter Parker took Mary Jane Watson to Coney Island, double-dating with Harry Osborn and Liz Allan. In front of their horrified eyes, a sniper claimed his fourth victim on the roller coaster. The teleporting mutant X-Man called Nightcrawler had also been at the amusement park investigating the previous murder of Eric Hoffman. Hoffman had been an old friend of his who had worked with Nightcrawler at a carnival in Europe.



Believing the strange-looking mutant was the sniper, Spider-Man attacked Nightcrawler atop the giant ferris wheel. They later resumed their battle on the Roosevelt Island Tramway, alongside the 59th Street Bridge. But this second encounter was cut short by the intervention of the Punisher, who believed the combatants knew something about the sniper, who had been assuming his modus operandi.



Pooling their resources, the threesome discovered that the real culprit behind the murders was a criminal seeking revenge on the pistol-packing vigilante. Years before, a two-bit gangster was thrown head-first through a plate glass window by the Punisher, earning him the name Jigsaw! The scar-faced felon captured and chained Spider-Man in order to lure the Punisher into the open. But Nightcrawler saved that day, and the costumed trio managed to put Jigsaw away.



The next day, Peter tried to apologize to Mary Jane for leaving her at Coney Island . . .

But while romance seemed to be diminishing for some, it was blossoming for others.



Meanwhile, the last of an ancient race of wizards and a master of science and sorcery, the mysterious Dark Rider roamed the time-stream. Upon his satanic steed with his two familiars, a red raven and a black cat, the Rider sought the power to become the master of all eternity by usurping the mystical power of others for himself!

At the Dark Rider's behest, Cotton Mather, the Puritan witchhunter of 1692, managed to use Dr. Doom's time machine to abduct the Scarlet Witch from her Avengers domicile. Under Mather's mental control, the Witch attacked Spider-Man in Latveria before accompanying the colonist back to 17th Century Salem.

But Spider-Man, accompanied by the Scarlet Witch's android husband, the Vision, managed to race to that time and place to rescue her. But if that weren't enough, they found themselves united with the most surprising ally of all . . .



Dr. Maria Madison was a bionics scientist at Empire State University and the daughter of one of J.J.J.'s deceased acquaintances. She would come to play a major role in the publisher's life.



Finally, when the might of all four of these super beings was not enough to contain the Dark Rider, Moondragon, the mind-bending priestess from Titan, followed their psychic resonances into the past. Their combined assault of mental, physical, technological, and supernatural abilities managed to reduce the ancient wizard to ashes.



While the others returned to their own time, Spider-Man asked that they return the time platform to this era while he attempted to save the people he had met in Salem accused of witchcraft. But when he made his way back to the town, he discovered that he was too late — they had already been hung.



Returning through time from that epic struggle, an electrical storm caused the web-slinger to overshoot his mark. He wound up in the 21st Century, where he encountered the freedom fighter called Killraven. A band of soldiers attacked them with hallucinogenic gas, but as Spidey fought his worst nightmare on the hallucinatory plane (Mary Jane as the Green Goblin!) he and Killraven were actually destroying the soldiers who captured them. At the conclusion to the battle, Spider-Man leaped aboard the time platform, hoping to make it back to his own time.

Doom's time machine deposited Spider-Man in the middle of Times Square, but again it missed its mark by more than a decade. Spidey was shocked to see that his home city looked like a battlefield, but even more so when he ran into this alternate reality's version of the cyborg called Deathlok the Demolisher! Spider-Man reluctantly teamed up with Deathlok against a group of zombie-like teenagers called "muties." When the web-spinner once again boarded the time-craft, he prayed that this future wasn't the future of his own time.



Patrolling over Long Island City, Spider-Man got caught in a titanic explosion caused by a toy plane at the local Stark International plant. Plummeting toward the nearby Calvary Cemetery, the armored Avenger, Iron Man, saved the web-slinger from certain doom. In the cemetery, the two heroes met a very unique individual . . .

But when the platform finally discarded Spider-Man to his correct time, the scene was almost similar to the one he had just departed — a volcano had sprouted in the middle of the Hudson River! The Basilisk had returned and he had mastered the powers of the Alpha-Stone and the Omega-Stone. He had used his increased powers to begin a volcanic chain reaction with which he intended to destroy civilization. Spider-Man discovered that the ever-lovin' blue-eyed Thing of the Fantastic Four had already engaged the villain. Lending his web-spinning hand, the crime-fighters knocked the Basilisk toward his own volcano. As the Basilisk lost consciousness, his destructive eye-beams lost control and destroyed the volcano. The Basilisk found himself trapped underground.



Jean DeWolff was the daughter of New York City Police Commissioner, Phillip DeWolff. Obsessed with his conservative beliefs about manhood, Phillip DeWolff could not forgive his wife when their second child proved to be a girl, Jean. He divorced his wife and maintained custody of his son, Brian. Jean's mother married a patrolman, who grew very close to Jean. Thus, Jean decided to become a policewoman when she grew up.

She entered the police academy and received the highest grades there next to her brother, Brian, who had already earned his shield. Brian, however, vanished that night during a clash with criminals who killed his partner. Jean graduated the academy the next day and was assigned to Manhattan's 37th precinct in Queens as an assistant detective. She was placed in charge of investigating Brian's disappearance, despite her father's misogynous protests.

Actually, Phillip DeWolff had witnessed his son's gunfight with the criminals. He secretly used an electromagnetic revitalizer to restore Brian to life as the Wraith, a being whose mind and psychic powers were controlled by Phillip DeWolff.

Jean DeWolff quickly rose through the ranks to become captain of the 37th precinct. She became known for wearing 1930's style clothing. Her investigation of the "mad bomber" of Stark Enterprises led to confrontations between the Wraith and herself, Spider-Man, Iron Man, and the sorcerer Doctor Strange. Phillip DeWolff, who was now insane, was using his son to kill criminals. The three costumed heroes defeated Phillip DeWolff, who was judged to be guilty of the Wraith's crimes. Doctor Strange healed the Wraith, and Brian was freed from his father's mental control. Subsequently, Jean and Brian, as the Wraith, aided Iron Man against the millionaire, Midas, who had temporarily seized control of Stark International.

Peter Parker returned home, expecting to be greeted by the stark, lonely walls of his barren apartment. So imagine his surprise when he was welcomed home by his friends to a flat filled with furnishings!



After a brief pairing with Captain America against the French mercenary Batroc and a demon from the dimension of the Night People (strange, misshapen creatures who kidnapped people to populate their world), Spider-Man delegated himself the responsibility of resolving a recent rash of robberies. He soon discovered they were being masterminded by none other than Wilson Fisk, the undisputed Kingpin of crime!

Fisk was still desperately trying to rejuvenate his ailing son, Richard. He captured Spider-Man and stole a portion of the web-slinger's life force to restore his son to life, almost at the expense of Spidey's own. Thus, one of Spider-Man's most troublesome foes of recent years owes his life to the wall-crawler, while the Kingpin almost met his demise at the bottom of a river. But the Kingpin swam into a drainage pipe, and hauled himself out of the water. The prolonged lack of oxygen to his brain, however, would leave him amnesiac for months.

For taking care of him while he was sick due to the Kingpin, Peter Parker brought Gloria Grant to J. Jonah Jameson to interview for the job of the publisher's secretary, left vacant by the honeymooning Betty Leeds. Much to his surprise...



Meanwhile, Edward Lansky, vice-chancellor of Empire State University, concocted a criminal plot against the New York City government to prevent budget cuts for higher education. Lansky used the school's facilities and his own know-how to design a special body-suit capable of harnessing the power of light. Calling himself Lightmaster, he enlisted the Tarantula and Kraven the Hunter to kidnap three city government officials, including the mayor.



The plan was thwarted by Spider-Man, who quickly disposed of the Tarantula and Kraven. He then defeated Lansky by running a current of electricity through him in an attempt to short circuit his body-suit. However, the masked hero unwittingly transformed Lightmaster into a being of unstable energy in this manner, and the villain would soon return with a vengeance.

While one light was turned off, Peter Parker began to see a light at the end of the tunnel in his relationship with MJ.



But Spider-Man had enough on his mind already when Stegiron, the Dinosaur Man, kidnapped Dr. Curt Connors' son. He demanded that Connors produce a formula that would enable Stegiron to clone an army of dinosaurs in exchange for Billy's life. But the strain proved too much for Dr. Connors, who transformed into the Lizard and attacked the Dinosaur Man. But when the two reptile-men decided to team up, the scales were really tipped against the web-head. Fortunately, Spidey concocted an antidote within his web-shooters for the Lizard and he then defeated Stegiron in Central Park. The cold Christmas Eve weather sapped the Dinosaur Man's strength, and the villain disappeared beneath a frozen pond.



Spider-Man spent part of that Christmas reminiscing with some of his amazing friends...



Meanwhile, with the Kingpin and Hammerhead out of the picture, a Harlem gangster chief known as Mr. Morgan decided to extend his operation downtown. His first move in his quest for power was to recruit the Vulture, who had been posing as a repair shop owner while rebuilding and increasing his powers. Insulted by the gangster's offer, the Vulture attacked Morgan, claiming that he would never work for a mere mobster. The Vulture then issued a challenge against Spider-Man, and backed his words up by taking hostages!

But while webs and feathers tangled atop Manhattan's skyline, Morgan decided to rob the Vulture of his revenge by hiring an assassin called the Hitman to kill Spider-Man. The Hitman was a Vietnam War veteran, Lieutenant Burt Kenyon, who had been declared mentally unfit and was discharged from the service. Suffering from post-aggressive tendencies, Kenyon channeled that aggression as the Hitman.



Spidey outwitted the mercenary and the bird of prey by making himself an easy target for both. As the Hitman fired his fatal round, Spider-Man grabbed the Vulture with his legs and . . .



Meanwhile, J. Jonah Jameson's relationship with Dr. Marla Madison was progressing, at least on a professional basis. The relentless publisher had hired her to build him a new Spider-Slayer robot. At that same time, Jackson Arvad, the chief scientist for electromagnetic research at the Brand Corporation, was under severe pressure to develop projects for his superior, James Melvin, under threat of being fired. During a laboratory mishap, Arvad was hurled into the self-contained electromagnetic field of a "magno-chamber." The residual high frequency field weakened the electromagnetic attraction between the molecules of the scientist's body, causing them to gradually disperse.

Melvin held Arvad in the magno-chamber long enough to question him on any useful scientific applications the accident might have had. He then left Arvad to die.

Arvad soon discovered, however, that with great concentration he could control the dispersion of his body's molecules. Unfortunately, every time he relaxed his concentration, he found it more difficult to reintegrate. Fearing that his molecule's would drift apart, he contacted the criminal scientist Dr. Jonas Harrow, the man who gave Hammerhead and the Kangaroo their superhuman attributes.

Pretending to help him, Harrow implanted a tiny receptor in Arvad's skull with which he could disrupt Arvad's control over his molecules. Harrow then coerced the wraith-like being to carry out certain crimes for him as the Will O' The Wisp.

During one of these capers, the Wisp crossed paths with Spider-Man. The Wisp was seeking to steal certain plans for Harrow while Spidey was trying to discover the contents of an envelope in jolly Jameson's possession. Someone had sent the publisher the photographs Harry Osborn had taken which revealed the web-slinger disposing of his clone's body. To J.J.J. it was incontrovertible proof that Spider-Man had killed Peter Parker, and was now impersonating the young photographer!

The Wisp misconstrued the parcel Peter had purloined for the package he was supposed to pilfer. Things went from bad to worse at their encounter at the Rockefeller skating rink when Jameson's new Spider-Slayer crashed the party.

Spider-Man defeated the Spider-Slayer by hurling it across the ice at the giant Prometheus statue, which toppled onto the robot, rendering it immobile. The web-spinner then tried to persuade the Will O' The Wisp to resist the man controlling him. After much deliberation, the Wisp decided to rebel against Harrow. Realizing the wraith's intent, Harrow activated the device in the Wisp's skull and dissipated him. Unbeknownst to Spider-Man, however, the Wisp's consciousness remained intact.



Peter Parker then had to conduct some fast talking to convince Jonah that his photos were actually carefully-crafted double exposures.



While Spider-Man was preventing Dr. Faustus, the self-styled "world's greatest psychologist," from contaminating a flu vaccine with a psychogenic additive, Mary Jane found her thoughts inexorably drawn to the altar with Liz Allan's imminent wedding.



Some time earlier, in the Nevada desert, an experiment gone awry had resulted in a nuclear explosion and the apparent destruction of the top-secret government think-tank known as "the Nest." Now, the world's first International Conference on Man-Made Mutation, held on board an airborne jumbo jet, was attacked by a squadron of Rakks, the Nest's robot guardian. On board that jet was Daily Bugle photographer Peter Parker and the foremost expert on mutants, Professor Charles Xavier, and his students. Peter donned his costume, and Xavier's students garbed themselves as well. Thus, Spider-Man and the X-Men defeated the Rakks and the plane was brought to a safe landing. Treating themselves with an experimental anti-radiation spray, the heroes investigated the source of the attack — the irradiated mound that was once the Nest! There they battled, and later aided, eight beings who had been transformed into the superhuman creatures known as the Gods of the Nest.

On their way home from Nevada, the X-Men and Spidey flew over the town of Liberty, New Mexico. In that town dwelled a genetically engineered life form called Woodgod. The satyr-like being's creators had also been experimenting with nerve-gas. The townspeople had grown suspicious of the activities and stormed their facilities, smashing a canister of the lethal nerve gas. The gas killed the entire population of Liberty.

Woodgod, however, proved to be immune to the gas, and roamed the desolate streets of Liberty alone until the incredible Hulk showed up. The U.S. Army had quarantined the small town, and when they discovered Woodgod and the Hulk, they attacked the creatures.

Witnessing this event, Spider-Man took leave of the X-Men to save the life of Bruce Banner, the Hulk's alter ego. Of course, his noble intentions backfired when he confronted the two man-beasts.



The web-slinger proved to the Hulk and Woodgod that he was on their side by helping them defeat the rogue army commander, Major Del Tremens of Tranquility Base. But Spidey's efforts also succeeded in trapping him within a rocket with which Tremens planned to send Woodgod to the moon. In the fabled Blue Area of our natural satellite, the wall-crawler witnessed the cosmic savior Adam Warlock, and the Elder known as the Gardener, in a feud over the almighty Soul-Gems with another powerful extraterrestrial called the Stranger.





After the Russian SHIELD operative, the Black Widow, helped her fellow arachnid oppose the plans of the Japanese mutant criminal, the Silver Samurai, Spidey teamed up with the new young hero in town, the human rocket called Nova! The two heroes joined forces to learn the identity of Photon, a Maggia agent who murdered Dr. Ralph Rider, Nova's uncle and Peter Parker's physics tutor.

Warlock returned Spider-Man to Earth just in time for the web-slinger to join forces with the blind super hero, Daredevil, against their common foe Electro and his new partner, Blizzard, who were extorting money from the *Daily Bugle* and the *Daily Globe*.

But trouble at the *Daily Bugle* was just beginning for Glory Grant. Morbius the Living Vampire returned and abducted her while possessed by the extradimensional emotion-stealing being known as the Empathoid. Spidey saved Glory only to be possessed by the Empathoid himself. The hero battled Morbius at an off-season fund-raising football game between two rival colleges. The overpowering emotions at the stadium caused the Empathoid to overdose, and the being self-destructed.

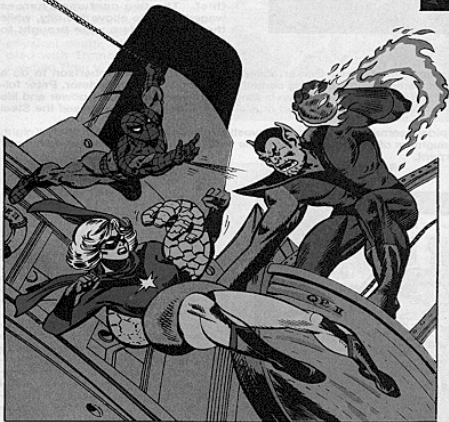


One spring evening, Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson returned to Peter's Chelsea apartment to discover his street cordoned off for the filming of the "Stunt-Master" show, starring Johnny Blaze. But the Trapster had recently broken out of jail and was seeking revenge on Blaze's alter ego, the original Ghost Rider! Spider-man saved the hellspawn hero's life, and this spirit of vengeance's version of a "penance stare" was a blast of hellfire that traumatized the Trapster's soul, making him experience the pain of all his victims. Spider-Man did not agree with the Ghost Rider's method and told him, "We're supposed to be the good guys, Mister — we're supposed to be *better* than the filth we fight!" to which Blaze casually replied, "I am what I am."

Spider-Man visited the grave of Ben Parker on the sixth anniversary of his uncle's death. From his perch in a nearby tree, he watched his Aunt May place flowers beneath her late husband's tombstone. When she left, he placed his own memorial atop his uncle's grave — a microscope similar to the one his uncle had given him six years earlier. Spider-Man hoped that it would help someone as his uncle's present had helped him.

WELL, FINDERS-KEEPERS!
THIS IS JUST WHAT MY TOMMY
WOULD LOVE!

WITH THIS, IT
WON'T MATTER
WHAT HIS FRIENDS
CALL HIM!



Maybe if someone had granted such a kind gesture to seventeen-year-old Terry Sorgenson, he wouldn't have grown so bitter after the accident that mutated him into Equinox, the Thermodynamic Man. But Terry's hostile attitude nearly killed the bug-sized Avenger, Yellow-jacket, which incited the vengeful fury of the Wasp! Only Spider-Man's composure from his familiarity with such distress calmed the Wasp down enough for them to contrive a means to defeat Equinox.

Severely beaten by the Kree Captain Mar-Vell, the Super-Skrull had been stranded on Earth without interstellar transportation. So he attempted to steal a highly refined crystal called cavorite, stashed aboard the Queen Elizabeth II to power his starship and return home, but he was opposed by Ms. Marvel and Spider-Man.

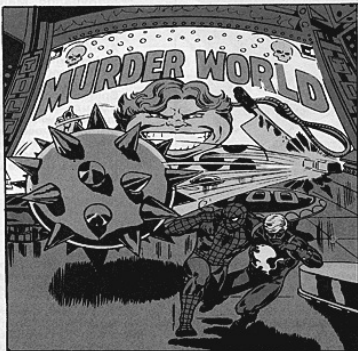
While Spidey fought the Super-Skrull, Ms. Marvel created an electro-net above the two, thereby blocking the broadcast energy beam from the Skrull Empire that augmented the Super-Skrull's ability to mimic the Fantastic Four's powers. Then, when the Super-Skrull was in contact with the cavorite, the blocking effect was cut. The sudden surge of power from the Skrull energy beam combined with the strange energies of the crystal to teleport him back to the Andromeda Galaxy.



After Spring Break, a campus protest was conducted over the closing of Empire State University's night school due to the college's costly purchase of the manuscripts of Dr. Abraham Erskine, the late scientist who had created Captain America. The manuscripts were seemingly stolen by the martial artist called the White Tiger, who was actually a night school student named Hector Ayala. Hector had recently acquired the mystical talismans of the Sons of the Tiger and became a super hero in his own right. But when Spider-Man discovered the Tiger about to interrogate the true culprit, the wall-crawler naturally assumed him to be the thief. The two costumed heroes waged a battle above the city, while the real offenders were brought to justice below.

With the rent due on his apartment, Peter Parker accepted a job from Joe Robertson to do a photo-spread on the house of Daniel Rand. Sensing something wrong with its proprietor, Peter followed Danny to the park as Spider-Man. There the web-slinger witnessed Iron Fist's power and life force, or *chi*, drained by an exile of Danny's homeland of K'un-Lun, a being calling himself the Steel Serpent.

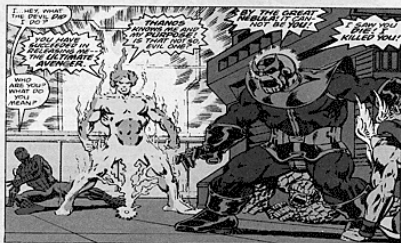
To save Iron Fist's life, Spidey teamed up with private investigators Colleen Wing and Misty Knight, sometimes known as the Daughters of the Dragon. But in the end, it was Iron Fist who saved himself and destroyed the Steel Serpent.



After a brief encounter with the hair-raising Medusa and the rest of her Inhuman clan, Spider-Man's tiresome team-ups continued as he battled the playboy assassin called Arcade alongside the British super hero, Captain Britain. The two champions escaped Murderworld, Arcade's lethal, life-size pinball machine, but Arcade would return to seek new challenges among the X-Men. Captain Britain would later change his appearance and become a founding member of the British super-group, Excalibur.

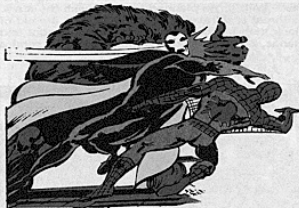
Back in the cosmos, the mad, death-worshipping Titan called Thanos had constructed a huge synthetic soul-gem to hold the energies of the other six. With it, he planned to extinguish the stars. Adam Warlock had by this time learned of Thanos's threat and traveled to Earth to enlist the aid of the Avengers and the Kree Captain Mar-Vell. Warlock then faced Thanos in personal combat and was slain. The Avengers were taken captive by Thanos, but not before Moondragon could send a telepathic distress signal to a sleeping Peter Parker.

Realizing that he was in way over his head, Spider-Man sought the aid of the Thing, who piloted them to Thanos's starship, Sanctuary II, to rescue the Avengers. Spider-Man, influenced by the abstract entities Lord Order and Master Chaos, released Warlock's spirit from the soul-gem the cosmic savior had worn. Seething with cosmic power released through his physical death, Warlock grappled with Thanos and turned the mad Titan to stone.



Returning to Earth, Spider-Man discovered that the wounds he had earlier inflicted on Kraven had healed. The Hunter stalked and captured the were-woman known as Tigra to avenge an earlier defeat. He placed a "control collar" around her neck, forcing her to obey his commands. Pitting her against Spider-Man, Kraven was once again bested by the two. He then retreated to Haiti in order to re-think his life and goals.

Peter Parker, on the other hand, retreated to the circus with Mary Jane to escape his troubles. Both were surprised to see the Man-Thing on exhibit. Peter thought it was quite unethical to cage the swamp creature, so he later released it as Spider-Man and returned the monster to its Everglades abode.



But unbeknownst to Spider-Man, the young sorceress Jennifer Kale and her mentor Dakimh had been bound to an arcane tower by D'Spayre, a demon who draws psychic sustenance from the fear expressed by others. D'Spayre planned to corrupt his two captives and make them serve him, until he was challenged by the web-slinger and the muck-monster.

D'Spayre used his powers to overwhelm Spider-Man with fear, but the crimefighter suppressed his fright. Dakimh and Jennifer were released and they used their powers to exile D'Spayre to another dimension.

Spider-Man returned to New York during a late spring snow-fall, where he discovered that the Living Pharaoh had once again abducted Alexander Summers, the destructive reserve X-Man codenamed Havok. Spider-Man freed Havok, only to have the Pharaoh appear and battle Havok, each firing destructive energy at the other.



Their combat seemed stalemated until the Pharaoh placed an ank-like device on his opponent that turned Havok's power against him, paralyzing him. The Living Pharaoh then placed Havok in a casing that transmitted the young mutant's energy to him, subsequently transforming the Pharaoh into the Living Monolith.

The Asgardian thunder god Thor combatted the Monolith while Spider-Man once again freed Havok. Once the ankh-like device was removed from Alex, the Monolith was easily defeated.

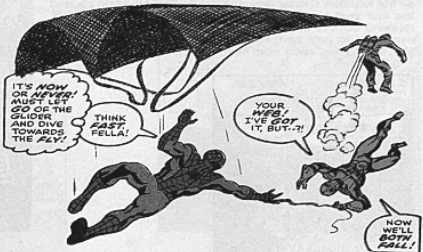
The weather went from bitter cold in early April to a heat wave in late April when May Parker, Anna Watson, and other members of the Gray Panthers demonstrated for senior citizens' rights in front of City Hall. Peter needed money to bail his aunt out of jail, so he joined Mary Jane as a crowd-extra on the set of the horror movie, *Spawn of the Spider*. Instead, he managed to land a starring role as Spider-Man.

However, three master criminals whose careers had been cut short by the wall-crawler donned powerful arachnoid monster costumes and unsuccessfully attacked the hero as the Spider-Squad.

Although the movie production turned out to be an insurance fraud scheme, the charges against Aunt May were dropped. To celebrate, Mary Jane invited Peter for a nostalgic cup of coffee at the Coffee Bean Barn, Peter's old college hangout. Of course, another emergency arose and Peter had to make some feeble excuse to leave his girlfriend yet again.



Later, Peter Parker leaped at the chance to photograph the costumed stuntman, the Human Fly, in Houston, Texas, to learn if he was connected to the villain he had fought months earlier. But the Fly proved his valor when he helped Spidey bring down a hijacker called the Mercenary.



Robert Farrell, the oldest of seven children, had to support his family when his father abandoned them. Like Peter Parker, Robert had excelled in science, but he had to start working immediately after graduating. Robert joined the Air Force to receive a higher education where he could become an expert in certain areas of technology.



The Racer's debut as a costumed criminal was not very auspicious due to Spider-Man's timely interference. After stealing a briefcase filled with negotiable securities from a courier, the thief was easily captured by the crimefighter.

Meanwhile, breaking into the Fenster Pharmaceutical Corporation Laboratories, the Molten Man threatened to burn the face of a lab technician unless she prepared the chemicals he needed, since he had grown too hot to handle the ingredients himself. The technician then injected the serum into the Molten Man. Miraculously, his epidermal temperature fell and the liquid metal ally synthesized in his skin melted away.

But Mark Raxton only remained human for a few seconds as the reaction shortly reversed itself. This situation caused the last vestiges of rationality to snap in Raxton's mind. Seeking out his stepsister, Liz Allan, the only person who ever tried to help him, the Molten Man went berserk when she, too, turned away from him.



Then Robert's mother suffered a heart attack and was removed to Newhope Memorial Hospital. Unable to pay the hospital bills for her treatment and support his siblings, Robert turned his considerable talents toward crime. Using his scientific genius, he designed a weapon-equipped costume as well as a jet-powered gyroscopic skateboard and became the Rocket Racer.



Yelling that his death would mean nothing if she was not with him, the entire laboratory exploded from the Molten Man's intense heat. Despite a nasty shoulder wound, Spider-Man saved Liz, who was convinced that she had killed her stepbrother. She broke off her engagement with Harry Osborn because she felt that she destroyed everyone for whom she ever cared.

Shortly thereafter, the People's Liberation Front hired the Hitman to kidnap J. Jonah Jameson, who had been writing editorials against the terrorist organization. The mercenary struck at the Daily Bugle building where Spider-Man, aided by the Punisher, attempted to prevent the kidnapping.



Spidey learned that the Hitman had saved the Punisher's life in the 'Nam. When Frank Castle asked Lt. Kenyon, how he could repay him, Kenyon told him remember that he owed him a life. So when their conflict rekindled at the Statue of Liberty, Spidey breathed a sigh of relief, when the Punisher decided to help him and Jameson instead of the Hitman.

Meanwhile, Harry Osborn's mental stability was quite precarious due to the breakup of his love affair with Liz. He made an appointment for a psychotherapy session.



Harry responded to the psychiatrist's goading by attacking him, and in the scuffle, Hamilton's desk lamp broke. And in the darkness, more ominous words were never spoken.

But we'll have to keep you in the dark, true believer, until next issue.

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